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1994/06/15

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Columbia Point Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Fax # (617) 929-4538
Voice # (617) 929-4582

FAX TRANSMISSION SHEET

DATE: June 15, 1994

TO: Robert S. McNamara

FROM: Suzanne Forbes, Kennedy Library

NUMBER OF PAGES INCLUDING COVER: 10

MESSAGE: Eight pages of notes taken by Brian Vandermark from Vietnam Presidential Recordings.

JUN 13 94 8:22 NO.001 P.02
10:617-929-4538
NHRH=NLK

NOTES OF KENNEDY LIBRARY PRESIDENTIAL RECORDINGS ON VIETNAM

Tape #	Date	Page #	NLK Material	FRUS 1961-1963 Material
107/A42	8/26/63	1	Sanitized copy Hilsman Memcon re: Vietnam 3 pp.	Vol. III, Doc. 289 4 pp.
108/A43	8/29/63	2	Same as enclosed FRUS	Vol. IV, Doc 15 6 pp.
111/A46	9/19/63	3	None	None
114/A49	10/2/63	4-5	None	None
		6	Declassified Summary Record of NSC Meeting No. 519 4 pp.	None
		7	None	None
117/A53	10/25/63	8	None	None

B:"TAPENOTE"

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CLASSIFIED COLLECTIONS RESEARCH NOTES

BRIAN VAN DE MARK

AGENCY NSC

LOCATION:

Tape Number	Starting Point	Ending Point	Date	Meeting Reference	Manuscript Location
107/A42 DAT Tape 1	00:22:50	00:23:12	8/26/63	Vietnam	

RSM: "I suggest we query Lodge on whom he would think would be qualified to replace Diem. . . . We have our prestige, we have our troops committed there, and it seems to me we ought to have some voice in the man to replace Diem, if he is to be replaced. We put a weak man in there, we're going to be in real trouble."

NARA-NLK ID:617-929-4558 JUN 15 94 8:23 NO.001 P.03

JUN 15'94 8:35 No.002 P.03
ID:617-929-4538
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06/15/1994 11:43 4102675008
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PAGE 01

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CLASSIFIED COLLECTIONS RESEARCH NOTES

BRIAN VAN DE MARK

AGENCY NSC

LOCATION:

Tape Number	Starting Point	Ending Point	Date	Meeting Reference	Manuscript Location
108/A43 Reel 2	770	783	8/29/63	Vietnam	

RSM: "I don't believe we should dissociate as ourselves from the coup attempt, but I do favor Harkins' recommendation that we make one last attempt to persuade Diem to get rid of the Nhus. I think, however, that that attempt might be timed to occur immediately prior to the start of a coup, so that if the attempt fails, it can be followed very promptly by the coup attempt. At the present time, it appears to me that we're several days away from a coup capability, and therefore that they move to send Lodge and/or Harkins to discuss with Diem the removal of the Nhus is not appropriate today or tomorrow. But I would personally very much favor making such a move before the coup is started."

791 804

BSM: "I should have added that one of my major reasons for believing it wise to make one last attempt to have Diem to get rid of the Nhus is that I see no good alternative on the horizon. . . . the military leaders are now thinking of a military junta, and yet from what little I know of them--and I think I know them well--they aren't capable of running the government for long. So, for these reasons, I would make one last attempt--even though it's not likely to succeed--to say to Diem--" (interrupted by JFK)

JUN 15 94 8:24 NO.001 P.06
ID:617-929-4538
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CLASSIFIED COLLECTIONS RESEARCH NOTES

BRIAN VAN DE MARK

AGENCY NSC

LOCATION:

Tape Number	Starting Point	Ending Point	Date	Meeting Reference	Manuscript Location
114/A49 DAT Tape 1	00:46:20	00:47:05	10/2/63	George Ball, Averell Harriman, John McCone, and David Bell Vietnam (JFK, RSM, MDT, ~~and~~ McG^B--prior to NSC Meeting)	

JFK: "You think this thousand reduction can really--"

RSM: "Yes sir--"

JFK: "Is that going to be an assumption that it's going well, that if it doesn't go well--"

RSM: "No sir. One of the major premises, two major premises we have. The first is we believe we can complete the military campaign in the first three Corps in '64 and the IV Corps in '65. But second, if it extends beyond that period, we believe we can train the Vietnamese to take over the essential functions and withdraw the bulk of our forces. And this thousand is in conjunction with that . . . We need a way to get out of Vietnam, and this is a way of doing it. And to leave forces there when they're not needed I think is wasteful and complicates both their problem and ours."

NARA-NLK ID:617-929-4538 JUN 15 '94 8:23 No.001 P.05

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CLASSIFIED COLLECTIONS RESEARCH NOTES

BRIAN VAN DE MARK

AGENCY NSC

LOCATION:

Tape Number	Starting Point	Ending Point	Date	Meeting Reference	Manuscript Location
Tape 111/A46 Reel 3	994	996	9/19/63	Vietnam	

RSM: "I'd like to show him [Diem] that we do have a plan for getting out of there--at the time of success. We have worked it out in some detail."

JUN 15'94 8:24 No.001 P.07
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CLASSIFIED COLLECTIONS RESEARCH NOTES

BRIAN VAN DE MARK

AGENCY NSC

LOCATION:

Tape Number	Starting Point	Ending Point	Date	Meeting Reference	Manuscript Location
114/A49 DAT Tape 1	01:03:21	01:04:00	10/2/63	George Ball, Averell Harriman, John McCone, and David Bell Vietnam (JFK, RSM, MDT, McGB, ~~and possibly others~~ prior to NSC Meeting)	

JFK: "Well, let's say it [12/31/65 withdrawal date] anyway, and then '65 doesn't work out, we'll get a new date."

RSM: "I think, Mr. President, we must have a means of disengaging from this area, and we must show our country that means. The only slightest difference between Max and me in this entire report is in this one estimate of whether or not we can win the war in '64 in the upper three territories and in '65 in the fourth. I am not entirely sure of that. But I am sure that if we don't meet those dates in the sense of ending the major military campaigns, we nonetheless can withdraw the bulk of our US forces according to the schedule we have laid out and worked out because we can train the Vietnamese to do the job."

NARA-NLK ID:617-929-4538 JUN 15'94 8:24 No.001 P.08

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CLASSIFIED COLLECTIONS RESEARCH NOTES

BRIAN VAN DE MARK

AGENCY NSC

LOCATION:

Tape Number	Starting Point	Ending Point	Date	Meeting Reference	Manuscript Location
114/A49 DAT Tape 2	00:32:14	00:33:11	10/2/63	6 P.M. NSC Meeting on Vietnam	

JFK: "My only reservation about it [1,000 withdrawal statement] is that, uh, it commits us to a kind of if the war doesn't continue to go well, it looks like we were overly optimistic, and I don't--I'm not sure . . . of the benefit to get out at this time announcing a thousand."

RSM: "Mr. President, we have the thousand split by units, so that if the war doesn't go well, we can say these thousand would not have influenced the course of action."

JFK: "And the advantage--"

RSM: "The advantage to taking them out is that we can say to the Congress and the people that we do have a plan for reducing the exposure of US combat personnel to the guerrilla actions in South Vietnam--actions that the people of South Vietnam should gradually develop a capability to suppress themselves. And I think this will be of great value to us in meeting the very strong views of Fulbright and others that we're bogged down in Asia and will be there for decades."

NARA NLK JUN 15 94 8:23 NO.001 P.09
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CLASSIFIED COLLECTIONS RESEARCH NOTES

BRIAN VAN DE MARK

AGENCY NSC

LOCATION:

Tape Number	Starting Point	Ending Point	Date	Meeting Reference	Manuscript Location
114/A49 DAT Tape 2	00:33:18	00:33:49	10/2/63	6 P.M. NSC Meeting on Vietnam	

McGB: Quoting draft release: "Secretary McNamara and General Taylor reported their judgment that the major part of the US military task can be completed by the end of 1965, etc. I think we might also say in the next sentence they reported that by the end of this year--"

JFK: "Want to say, 'if vigorously pursued' as a . . ."

McGB: "Stimulus--"

JFK: "No, as a . . ."

RSM: "No, I'd rather not, because I think that if it [US training program] isn't vigorously pursued, we ought to get the bulk of the task force out."

00:34:02 00:34:14

RSM: "Whether it's vigorously pursued or not, we'll have a training program such that we can take them out, and we ought to be charged with the responsibility of doing that."

JFK: "All right."

JUN 13 94 8:23 NO.001 P.10
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CLASSIFIED COLLECTIONS RESEARCH NOTES

BRIAN VAN DE MARK

AGENCY NSC

LOCATION:

Tape Number	Starting Point	Ending Point	Date	Meeting Reference	Manuscript Location
117/A53 Reel 3	759	781	10/25/63	Vietnam	

RSM: "I don't see how we can withdraw from the plan of pressures which we have undertaken. I don't believe it's necessary to withdraw from that at the present time. Neither of the two conditions that we considered as the basis for withdrawal--either the weakening of the economy or the weakening of the war effort--or some movement of Diem to us, has occurred. I think we can continue the present posture, while I doubt very much if he will withdraw from ~~the~~ _____ at present. I do think that we must recognize that coup-plotting will continue indefinitely no matter what we do, and we ought to take our association with it in my opinion out of the very amateurish hands that have been controlling it so far--those hands, in particular~~ly~~ the Ambassador and Conein. . . . This is about the only thing, it seems to me, that we can do ~~to~~ that is to change the form of our contacts with the coup planners."